

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIMA 02115 101735Z
ACTION ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, PE
SUBJECT: CAMPAIGN AGAINST NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING ACCELERATES

REF: LIMA 1932, LIMA 1882

1. RECENT PRESS ACCOUNTS INDICATE THAT THE GOP'S ACCELERATED EFFORTS AT SUPPRESSING COCAINE TRAFFICKING HAVE BEEN HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL. PRESS ACCOUNTS AS TO THE AMOUNT OF COCAINE CAPTURED AND THE NUMBER OF TRAFFICKERS ARRESTED ARE SOMEWHAT CONFUSING, BUT THE IMPRESSION IS DEFINITELY ONE OF INCREASED ACTIVITY COMBINED WITH SOME GOOD LUCK.

2. THE SUPERIOR DIRECTOR OF THE PERUVIAN INVESTIGATIVE POLICE (PIP) MANUEL LEZAMA IBANEZ, IN A MARCH 8 PRESS CONFERENCE, CAPSULIZED RECENT PIP ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS. APPROXIMATELY 800 KILOS OF COCAINE PASTE HAVE BEEN SEIZED IN RECENT WEEKS IN A VARIETY OF RELATED OPERATIONS AND OVER 120 DRUG TRAFFICKERS AND USERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED. THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PIP OPERATION TOOK PLACE ON A FARM ON THE UCAYALI RIVER AN HOUR AND A HALF FROM THE CITY OF IQUITOS, WHERE 381 KILOS OF PASTE WERE SEIZED AND 10 PERUVIAN TRAFFICKERS WERE ARRESTED. THE LIGHT PLANE IN WHICH THE PASTE WAS TO HAVE BEEN TRANSPORTED TO COLOMBIA BROKE DOWN,
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PAGE 02 LIMA 02115 101735Z

WAS TORN APART AND THROWN INTO THE UCAYALI. THE TRAFFICKERS THEN TRIED TO TRANSPORT THE PASTE UPRIVER TO PUCALLPA, AND WERE SEIZED BY PIP OFFICERS.

3. THREE COLOMBIAN TRAFFICKERS WERE ARRESTED IN ANOTHER, RELATED CASE IN LIMA, ALONG WITH 8 PERUVIANS AND A PERUVIAN BORN YOUNG WOMAN OF US PARENTAGE. 76 KILOS OF PASTE, SEVERAL CARS AND

DOLLARS WERE SEIZED IN THIS OPERATION.

4. COMMENT: THE EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY GIVEN TO RECENT SUCCESSFUL PIP OPERATIONS COINCIDES WITH THE PUBLICATION OF THE NEW DRUG LAW (REFTELS) AND UNDERScores THE GOP'S ENHANCED COMMITMENT TO CONTROL DRUG TRAFFICKING AND CONSUMPTION. BOTH CAN ALSO BE INTERPRETED AS A SIGN TO THE US THAT CLOSER, EXPANDED COOPERATION IN NARCOTICS CONTROL IS NOW EXPECTED. REACTION TO THE NEW NARCOTICS LAW IN THE GOP-CONTROLLED PRESS HAS BEEN LARGELY POSITIVE, ALTHOUGH SOME COMMENTATORS HAVE POINTED OUT THAT THE LAW MUST BE STRICTLY AND IMPARTIALLY ENFORCED IN ORDER TO BE EFFECTIVE. FAR-LEFT "MARKA" OF MARCH 9 CRITICIZED THE NEW LAW SEVERELY, CALLING IT

A MEASURE DICTATED BY IMPERIALISTIC U.S. PRESSURES, AND DENOUNCING THE GRADUAL ELIMINATION OF COCA PRODUCTION AS AGGRESSION AGAINST HIGHLAND PERU'S CULTURAL HERITAGE. INDEPENDENT RIGHTIST WEEKLY "EL TIEMPO," ON THE OTHER HAND, QUESTIONS THE CENTRALIZATION OF THE CONTROL FUNCTION IN HANDS OF THE GOP, CONCRETELY THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, AND THE LACK OF CHECKS AND BALANCES THAT SUCH CENTRALIZATION IMPLIES. THE 76 KILOS SEIZURE IN LIMA RESULTED DIRECTLY FROM INFORMATION PROVIDED TO PIP BY DEA. DEA ALSO HELPED PERUVIAN AUTHORITIES TO ESTABLISH THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TRAFFICKERS ARRESTED IN LIMA AND THE PUCALLPA GROUP. DEA IN REVIEWING THE PIP'S RECENT CLAIMS RE ARRESTS AND SEIZURES EXPRESSED DOUBTS ABOUT THE 800 KILOS FIGURE CITED BY LEZAMA, AND ESTIMATED THAT THE AMOUNT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 LIMA 02115 101735Z

OF PAST SEIZED IN RECENT OPERATIONS WAS PROBABLY MORE LIKELY IN THE 500-600 KILO RANGE WHICH IS STILL HIGHLY RESPECTABLE FIGURE.

DECONTROL 6/9/78.
SHLAUDEMANN

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